



# THE PEOPLE IN YOUR LIFE MAKE YOU STRONGER.



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**DRUG AWARENESS WEEK**  
ALCOHOL / DRUGS / GAMBLING

**YOU USE  
SOCIAL  
MEDIA.**

**BUT HOW  
MUCH DO  
YOU KNOW  
ABOUT YOUR  
OWN SOCIAL  
NETWORK?**

**WHICH PEOPLE  
IN YOUR LIFE  
WOULD BE THERE  
IF YOU REALLY  
NEEDED THEM?**



There are a lot of people in your life. Some you're close with, others less so. All of these people are part of what's called your social network. In a social network, there are people you trust—people who are there for you when you need them, who listen to you and help you find a solution when you've got a problem. There are also people you share interests and do things with—people you like being around and want to listen to and help when they've got a problem.

### **WHAT'S GOOD ABOUT HAVING A SOCIAL NETWORK OF PEOPLE WHO ARE THERE FOR YOU?**

It lets you:

- > Talk about anything, express yourself, feel understood, and know that someone shares your thoughts and feelings
- > Share advice and useful information
- > Do things with other people or just hang out
- > Give and receive love and affection

Sharing and building connections with people you trust helps you feel loved and appreciated. It also helps you learn to be more assertive, listen to others, and communicate. Using these skills, you'll learn more about yourself and the people around you. You'll gain confidence and make better decisions, no matter the situation!

**It's good to know that people  
care about you and are there  
for you when you need them!**

### **WHO'S IN YOUR SOCIAL NETWORK?**

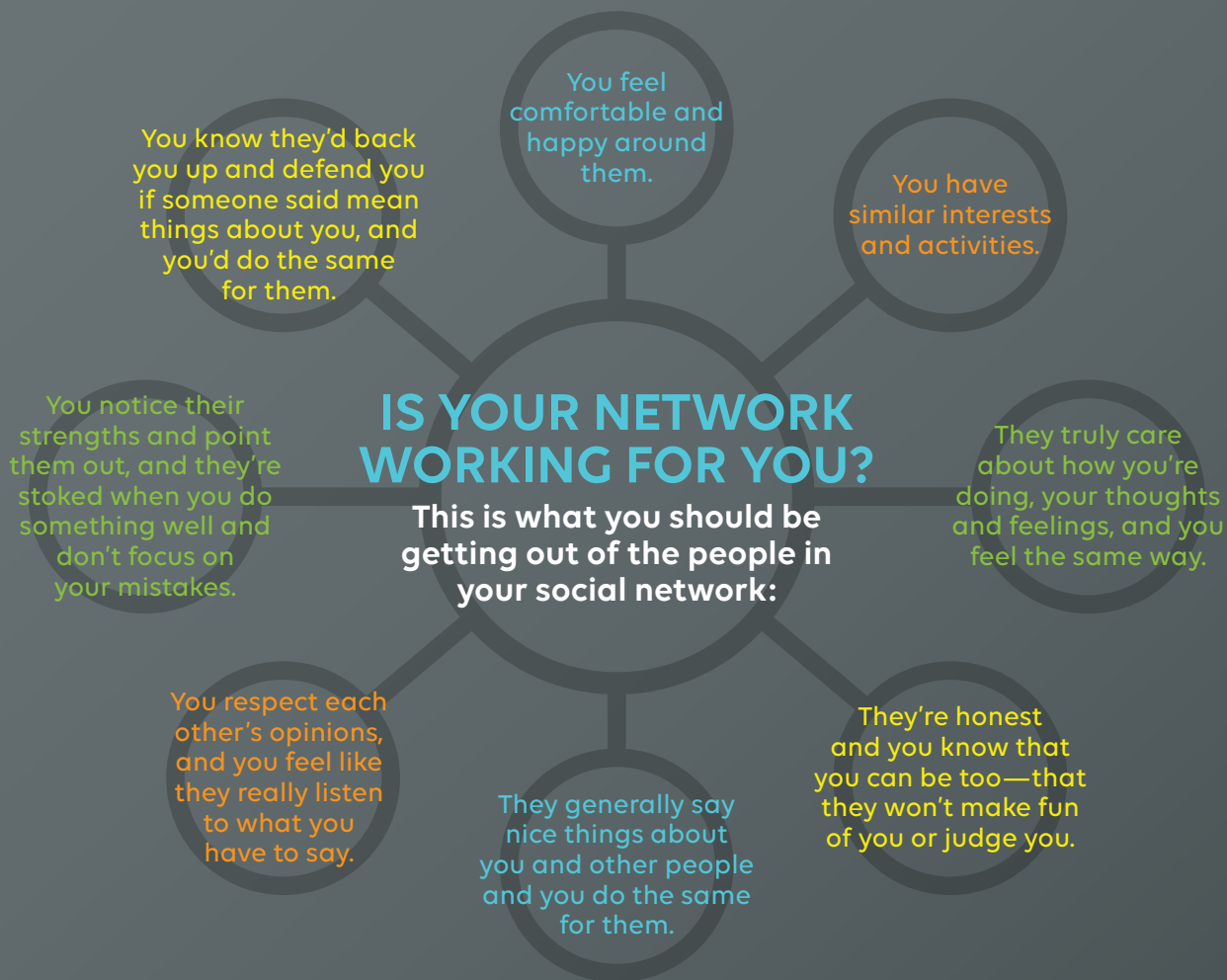
- > Your friends: people you spend a lot of time with, but also people you're happy to see socially, like school friends, friends in your neighborhood, and the people you do sports or other extracurricular activities with
- > Your parents, brothers and sisters, and cousins
- > Other adults you get along well with, like grandparents, uncles and aunts, or a teacher, coach, or neighbor

"I had a hard time when my parents separated. Luckily my cousin was there for me. She listened to me and would invite me out to the movies with her and her friends to get my mind off things."

- Alex

"When I need someone to talk to, I know my sister's there for me, but the person I share the most with is my friend Laura. We're really similar. We like the same things and we think the same way. I never feel judged by her."

- Alicia



Make a list of the people in your social network who match one or more of the above descriptions. If someone in your life isn't on the list, it doesn't mean you have to shut them out. But the relationship definitely has room for improvement!



**Getting older means you have more power and more opportunities to build, maintain, and grow a social network that really reflects who you are.**

**Here are a few ways to make that happen:**

## **BE ASSERTIVE**



**BEING ASSERTIVE** means knowing how to express your opinions, feelings, and needs in a way that's honest and respectful. It's an attitude that comes from knowing you matter and have the power to act on your needs and surroundings.



**BEING ASSERTIVE** gives people the chance to get to know the real you. It helps you build a social network of people like you, who will like the real you.

## KNOW HOW TO INTERACT

Knowing how to build relationships is something that everyone **CAN LEARN TO DO.**

Here are a few examples of people who could be better at interacting, and things that everyone can do to improve.



### THE "I'M ALWAYS RIGHT" KIND OF PERSON

Thomas often interrupts people. He finishes his friends' sentences and criticizes everyone's ideas and opinions.

**WAYS  
OF IMPROVING**

- > Good communication starts with good listening! Maybe that's why we have two ears and just one mouth—so that we can listen twice as much and talk a little less! 😊 Besides, listening means learning! Hearing someone else's opinion will help you learn about them and the topic being discussed.
- > Ask yourself if what you're saying could hurt someone's feelings. If you think the answer is yes, maybe you don't need to say it or maybe there's a different way of saying it!



### THE "RETREATS BEHIND A WALL OF SILENCE" KIND OF PERSON

Audrey barely talks and doesn't respond to verbal attacks. She says the same things as her best friend, so no one knows what she really likes or doesn't like.

**WAYS  
OF IMPROVING**

- > Sometimes, people who are shy worry about what other people think of them, which means they pay less attention to what other people are saying. To be a good friend when you're feeling shy, you can:
  - Start by taking a big breath and letting it all out at once
  - Decide not to play the "I'll bet he thinks that I think..." game
  - Tell yourself that sharing and being interested in others is a lot better than wondering what people think about you!
- > Another idea is to talk about yourself a little each day with your parents or with friends you trust. You can start by talking about a good thing that happened that day. Slowly, you'll learn to open up. Every person is a treasure just waiting to be discovered. Keeping yourself hidden away from the world just wouldn't be fair! 😊

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Being interested in others makes you interesting! When you really listen to other people and ask them questions during a discussion, they feel important. Everyone wants friends who really listen!

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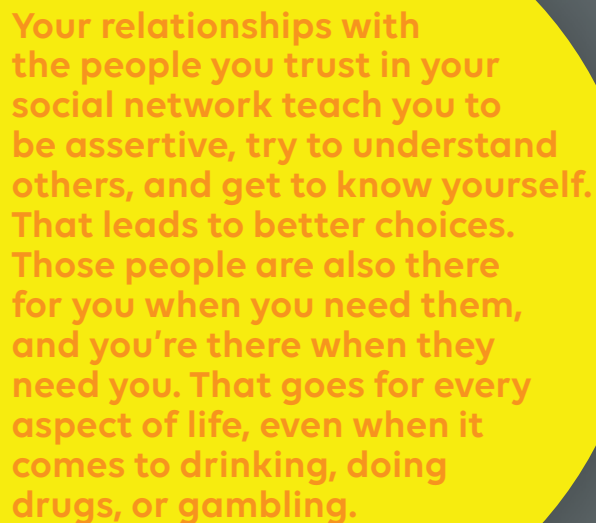
Being a teenager means wanting to try new stuff, test your limits, and do what your friends are doing. But when it comes to drinking, drugs, and gambling, **is everyone really “doing it”?**



**No.** Studies show that since 2000, the number of people your age who drink or do drugs has gone down. Same goes for gambling. So drinking or doing drugs isn't necessarily a rite of passage! 😊



## How can your social network protect you from the risks and consequences of drinking, doing drugs, and gambling?



**Your relationships with the people you trust in your social network teach you to be assertive, try to understand others, and get to know yourself. That leads to better choices. Those people are also there for you when you need them, and you're there when they need you. That goes for every aspect of life, even when it comes to drinking, doing drugs, or gambling.**

"The other night, I drank at a party. Instead of going back on my bike—and maybe hurting myself—I ended up accepting my brother's offer to come and pick me up with the car."

- Emmy

"Alex and I made a pact last year. We keep an eye on each other at parties to make sure that everything's okay and the other person is comfortable with what's going on. It's come in handy more than once!"

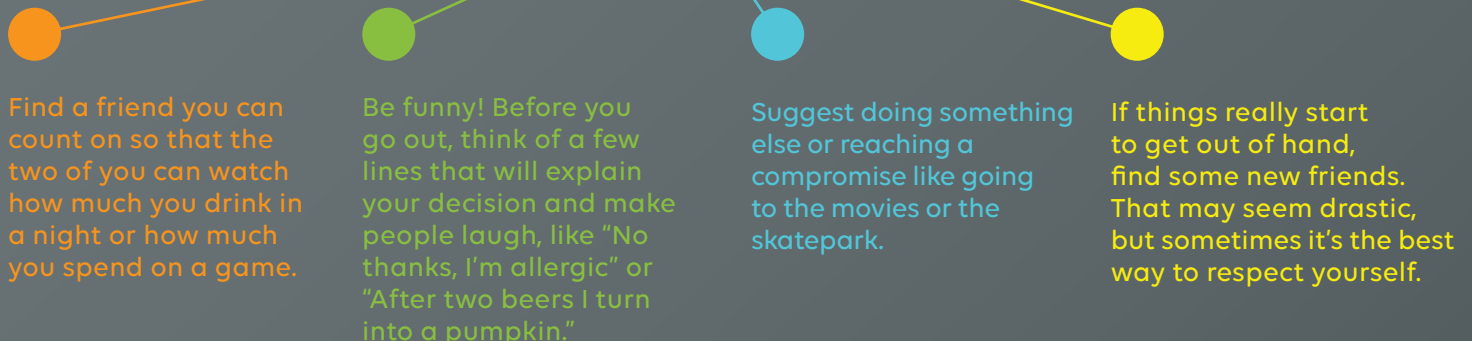
- Victor

"Yesterday, my friends and I started playing poker. I decided not to bet more than \$10 and I told my friend Henry. So when I hit \$10, I stopped playing. Another friend kept insisting that I keep playing, but I told him I wanted to save my money for something else. He kept pushing, so Henry stopped playing too and we went and practiced our jump shots for the basketball tournament that's coming up."

- Ian

Here are some strategies to help you avoid or reduce the risks related to drinking, doing drugs, or gambling:

### STRATEGIES



# RISKS AND CONSEQUENCES OF DRINKING OR DOING DRUGS

You have your own social network and a lot of other people have you in theirs. You want to make good decisions and back your friends up when they need it. So what are the risks and consequences of drinking, doing drugs, or gambling?

Even if you only use drugs or alcohol occasionally, there are immediate effects due to changes in brain function. The effects of alcohol or other drugs, like cannabis, are progressive and start with the first drink or hit, before you're even aware of it. At first you might feel relaxed, but even small doses can quickly lead to unpleasant feelings and consequences. For example, you might:

**Say hurtful things, even to people you care about**

**Make decisions you wouldn't have made if you were sober**

**Have unprotected sex and contract a sexually transmitted infection or face an unplanned pregnancy**

**Pick a fight**  
(even with a friend)

**Decide it's okay to get in a car with someone else who's been drinking or doing drugs**

**Post pics or comments on social media that could cause you problems with your family and friends, your school, or potential employers**

**More things you should probably know**

In gambling, even if you try to use skill, it's always luck that determines the winner. There's no way of predicting the results.

Cannabis is a drug. It's illegal to have it in your possession. Any amount can lead to legal action and a criminal record, regardless of your age.

The positive people that you trust in your social network can offer you information and support to help you make educated decisions about drinking, doing drugs, or gambling.

Even with good friends and family, there are times when you may want to talk to someone outside your circle, like a teacher or medical professional.

**HAVE  
QUESTIONS**  
ABOUT DRINKING,  
DRUGS, OR GAMBLING?

**WORRIED**  
about yourself or  
a friend when it  
comes to drinking  
or doing drugs?



**TEL-JEUNES**

1-800-263-2266 (or [teljeunes.com](http://teljeunes.com))

**DRUGS: Help and referral**

1-800-265-2626  
or 514-527-2626 (Montréal area)

**GAMBLING: Help and referral**

1-800-461-0140  
or 514-527-0140 (Montréal area)

Someone will answer your call confidentially, 24/7.

Or visit the website:

[resteencontrole.com](http://resteencontrole.com)